Historical Society of Palm Desert

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The Hourglass

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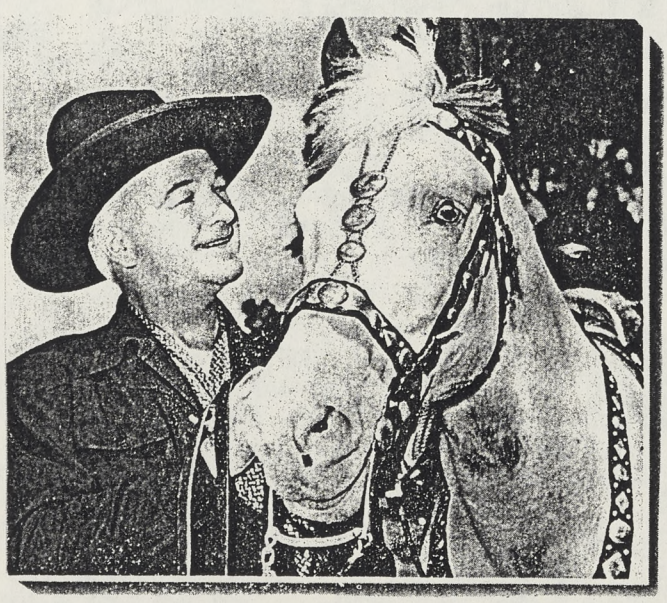
"Hopalong Cassidy" Open House at the Society
Saturday, January 31

The entire day will be dedicated to "Hoppy" with fun for everyone. Here is the schedule:

10 - 11 a.m.
- Hopalong Cassidy Multi-species trail dedication at Homme Adams Park (behind St. Margaret's Church on Hwy. 74)
- Grace Boyd, Hoppy's widow, will be in attendance
- Refreshments & entertainment by the "Coyote" band

11 - 4 p.m.
- Historical Society open house
- Hopalong exhibit and film clips and trail maps
- Visit with Grace "Tripalong" Boyd
- Get wooden nickels which can be exchanged for a cowboy bandana or movies at Cinemas Palme d'Or (at the mall)
- Black & white (Hoppy's favorite colors) refreshments



The Coachella Valley has over 200 miles of hiking trails, but most of them are not in Palm Desert. Rancho Mirage has the Bump & Grind trail, the Art Smith trail starts at Hwy. 74 and goes up the mountain, and there is the Carizzo Canyon trail. Eight miles up, near the lighted cross in Cahuilla Hills, behind Big Horn and to Cahuilla Park is the Gabby Hayes trail. Near the visitor's center there is the Randall Henderson trail. Another trail is located in the Living Desert near Eisenhower Mountain and south of Ironwood Country Club. The Homestead trail was also established. Now a new set of trails has been developed by the City.

On 5 acres the "Hopalong" Cassidy trail has been set up for year round hiking, horse riding, bicycling and dog walking. Burma Shave-style signage will be used along the trail in remembrance of Hoppy's ten rules for youngsters called the "Hoppy Code of Conduct" like.....drink your milk, eat your vegetables, mind your manners, and obey your parents.

Bill Boyd made his first cowboy movie as Hopalong in 1935 for Cecil B. De Mille. After making 66 movies, he became a western legend along with Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and Gabby Hayes. Boyd's endorsements of over 2500 products became a multi million dollar business. He insisted on good quality and reasonable prices for items bearing his label. Personal appearances sometimes drew 200, 000 to 300,000 people. Then he took on the role of America's first true TV hero.

On May 27, 1951 Boyd opened a family amusement park, where Marina del Rey is now located. It was built on 80 acres and was called "Hoppyland". Boyd retired from films in 1953 and Hoppyland was closed the following year. In 1972 he died at the age of 77.

As early as 1951 William & Gracie Boyd could be found at the Shadow Mountain Club participating in social activities along with the local residents. On most Saturday mornings you could find him at Ed Mullins' Palm Desert pharmacy and fountain passing out wooden Hopalong Cassidy coins with his name and picture on them. He frequently stopped in at Keedy's restaurant and Palm Desert School (now Washington Charter).

In the mid-50s the Boyds moved to the desert where they built a winter home and painted it their favorite colors - black and white (that's your clue to finding it even today.) Hoppy was easy to recognize in those days because he always dressed in black and drove around town in a white Cadillac. They eventually built two apartment buildings on the the north side of Highway 111 and called them by their nicknames, "Hopalong" and "Tripalong". These apartments were managed by Lil and Bill Phillips who are still residents of Palm Desert.

Don't miss this special celebration. Bring your family and friends!

THE AIRPLANE – 100 YEARS OLD

It was in 1903 that Wilbur and Orville Wright achieved the world's first successful powered, sustained, and controlled flights of an airplane. This was the result of experimenting with a kite and three gliders during the years of 1899-1902. For some unexplained reason these two U.S. inventors and aviation enthusiasts were able to realize their dream, though many had tried and failed.

The brothers, who were born in Indiana and Ohio, had demonstrated mechanical ability from the time they were very young. They designed and built a newspaper folding machine and a large printing press and worked as printers for several years. Later they opened a shop where they sold and repaired bicycles, eventually manufacturing them.

The experiments of the German, Otto Lilienthal, on hang-gliders inspired them but they rejected his theories. They adopted a rigid biplane with a forward elevator, twisting of the wings, and a rear rudder. This flight control system was patented in 1906.

After achieving the desired flight control they built a powered machine with a 12-horsepower motor and propellers. At Kitty Hawk in North Carolina on December 17, 1903 their invention made four sustained free flights, the longest lasting 59 seconds. Their third powered plane stayed airborne for a half hour in 1905. Thanks to the ingenuity of the Wright brothers the airplane has revolutionized our life styles.

GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON

On Dec. 17 Pres. Hal Rover, Dick and Ginny Folkers attended a seminar sponsored by the La Quinta Historical Society. Colonel Paul Kiener, Chief of Staff of the General Patton Army Air Field and expert on World War II history talked about the creation of the Desert Training Center. This project encompassed 18,000 square miles in Arizona, California and Nevada.

Although General Patton was in the Coachella Valley for only four months, his vision and determination created a training ground that took raw recruits and turned them into first class soldiers. They were made to run five miles daily wearing a full complement of equipment on their backs in the desert heat. These young men went into all areas of combat, both in the European and Pacific theaters of war.

General Patton appropriated water from the Metropolitan Water District, and he virtually took control of the roads, railroad and telephone lines in order to develop the training center. General Jimmy Doolittle and Patton worked on ground-air support tactics that helped to bring needed victories to our troops in the early stages of World War II. The soldiers would be trained and then sent to other assignments, usually combat zones.

Patton's vehicle pool was located in Palm Desert, south of Hwy. 111 and east of Portola Avenue. Hundreds of tanks were lined up row after row as far as the eye could see. A flag was installed on top of each tank, because when they were moving the dust was so thick it was impossible to see where they were. Tanks were shipped by rail to the east coast.

After Patton left, General Mark Clark trained a million men during the years of 1942 through 1944. A different group would come in every four months. Camp Young was the initial orientation center, where Patton had lived in a 16-foot square hut.

The movie "Patton" starring George C. Scott is the first really accurate historical account that has been produced, according to Colonel Kiener. The things Patton said and did were portrayed exactly the way they happened. One exception was that Patton had a high-pitched voice, unlike that of Scott. General Omar Bradley acted as a consultant during the filming of the picture.You may want to rent the video to get more insight into the personality and behavior of the General. He was either loved or hated by his subordinates.

Lindbergh was an excellent pilot and could fly any kind of plane. He warned his fellow Americans about Germany's power and the war machines that Hitler was developing. However, the pacifist movement was very strong at the time, which resulted in the neglect of the United States Armed Forces. General Rommel was a genius and is compared to Robert E. Lee. If Hitler had listened to his generals the Germans could have won at Dunkirk.

Colonel Kiener is working on the Historic Desert Training Center Heritage Initiative program, which is associated with the Bureau of Land Management - California Desert District. The objectives are to educate the public about World War II and how it changed our nation. It is hoped that archeological studies of the entire training center area can be undertaken and eventually all the camps can be recreated and opened to visitors. Also they want to give Camp Young national historical monument status, where Joe Chiriaco originally operated his gas station. Federal funds would be needed to accomplish this feat.

Part of the Heritage Initiative program for the instruction of school children is presently just over the horizon. A 47-foot trailer with a mural depicting World War II will be open in April. It will be set up as a traveling museum, which can later to be scheduled for a national tour.

BOOKS FOR SALE
(prices include tax)

CALIFORNIA DESERT RESORT CITIES - Reflections & Visions Victoria J. Baily, publisher	$ 40.94
COACHELLA VALLEY - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Dick J. Soltys	$ 53.82
DESERT MEMORIES – Desert Sun, publisher	$ 43.04
COACHELLA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA – Patricia Laflin	$ 43.04
WHITE SUN - Memoirs of a Desert Guest Ranch – Helen D. Dengler	$ 25.00
PALM SPRINGS WEEKEND - Architecture & Design of a Midcentury Oasis – Alan Hess & Andrew Danish	$ 43.04
PALM SPRINGS - First Hundred Years – Frank M. Bogert	$ 59.20
A DESERT SCRAPBOOK – Virginia Wright-Frierson	$ 18.31
LIZARDS FOR LUNCH - A Roadrunners Tale – Conrad J. Storad	$ 17.18
DESERT PALM OASIS – Dick Ruehrwein	$ 7.48
COACHELLA VALLEY HIKING GUIDE – John A. Fleming	$ 8.56

HOW "CAHUILLA HILLS" GOT ITS NAME

JACK RABBIT NEWS

Barbara Burns-Editor — Donald Burns-Asst. Editor
Vol. 1 No. 16 — May 10, 1953 — 5 cents a copy

CAHUILLA HILLS WINS !!

A dark horse came into the picture the last day of the name-your-section contest and made big strides to victory. The name was written on so many ballots that it won with a land slide. The final score is: Desert Haven - 3 Desert Hills - 5 Desert Heights - 5
Cahuilla Cove - 4 Cahuilla Hills - 14

Perhaps some of you do not know the source of Cahuilla. It was the name of an Indian tribe who roamed these hills and lived here many years ago. The name is pronounced Ca-wee-a.

We sincerely hope the new name will be unanimously accepted and approved. Work will go ahead next Fall on the entrance sign and also the project of fixing up the road. We are seeing the beginnings of a grand community. Let's keep the community spirit alive with friendliness and cooperation.

Note: Recently Barbara Burns visited our museum with an ancient scrapbook under her arm. When she was 13 years old, she took it upon herself to publish a newspaper for her neighbors in Section #36 of the hills southwest of what is now the City of Palm Desert. The "Jack Rabbit News" later became the "Cahuilla Weekly." Her mother typed from Barbara's hand-written notes. Every week she would circulate among the other residents to gather family news for her 'Personals' column. Who was finishing up the construction of their home, who was remodeling or painting, who were the weekend guests of who.

We copied all the issues of Barbara's newspaper and now have a good background on the beginnings of Cahuilla Hills. What a precious collection to be added to our archives! At present Ms. Burns is doing missionary work and she lives in Brazil. This collection of information is an excellent example of the value of your donations to the archives.

NEW MEMBERS

Business:
Richard J. Soltys Productions
Supporting:
Len & Jasmine Forman
Fritz Frauchiger
Sam & Gerda Hook
Alfred & Patricia Staples
Family:
Don & Bev Graybill
Robert & Mary Roche
Gerry & Linda Thibault

Annual Dues: Life.....$1,000
Patron.....$250
Contributing.....$100
Business: new $75.....renewal $50
Supporting.....$50
Family.....$25
Individual.....$20

Ask a friend to join !! A great gift !!

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Deceased Members

Richard "Dick" Coffin - A local realtor whose activities dated back to the pioneer days.

Carl Prout - Active in community projects & charitable benefits.

Jean Krauss- In the 40s/ 50s Jean (Walker) and her husband owned the Printing Company in the Desert Magazine Building.

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DONATIONS TO ARCHIVES & EXHIBITS

Ed & Pat McCarthy.....Palm Springs Mag. 30s
Millie Bird.....3 Desert Rat Scrap Books
Joyce White.....various stationery
Jean Hollenbeck.....5 news items, 1 letter 70s, 90s
Jean Ernst.....White Sun book, 12 photos, 17 news items
Patty Coffin.....6 photos, 8 x 10
Adele Ruxton.....National Monument materials
Jan Holmlund.....National Monument materials
Allen Valley.....State license dated 1-13-53 for "Palm Desert Corporation"
Kenneth Burns.....A letter from Bing Crosby
Barbara Burns.....A large collection of the first newspaper in Cahuilla Hills.

DOCENT FIELD TRIP

Jean Ernst took her volunteers to CVWD headquarters on Nov. l3. An interesting talk was given by Bob Keeran, who then distributed videos to share with others. Sewage from our homes is passed through a treatment plant and then piped to some of the golf courses. CVWD has a long history of planning and preparing for the future. Our drinking water is pure well water, although it is chlorinated as a protective precaution. The chlorine taste will dissipate if you let the water set for a while.

Attending were: Jean Ernst, Dick Folkers, Lyn & Ella Mae Manor, Laura McCandless, Doris Otego, Hal Rover, Carol Scanny, Rosemarie Sinsheimer & friend Betty.

Docent Training Meetings

Our volunteers meet frequently to become informed about the history of the area. You are welcome to join us, especially if you are willing to volunteer at the museum during the hours it is open to the public. Those interested should call Jean at 346-0041.

NEXT DOCENT MEETING
Friday, Jan. 16, 10 a.m.
To prepare for "Hoppy" Day

YARD SALE BIG SUCCESS

On the weekend of Oct. 25 & 26 our third annual Fire House sale was held. For the entire preceding week, dedicated members sorted, priced and displayed. When it was over we heaved a collective sigh of relief – we were tired and happy because the Society netted over $5000. Next year we plan to sort and price as we collect donations to avoid the last-minute rush. Chairman Dick Folkers thanks one and all.

SANTA ON ENGINE #1

The Society's traditional entry in the Golf Cart Parade featured President Hal Rover in the driver's seat and the Folkers family (Dick, Ginny, Chuck, Michelle, Sarah, Emily & Katie) riding on top and waving to the crowd. Santa, his helpers and elves always get a warm reception.The parade was enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages. Our compliments to Parade Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

The 2004 Membership Contest is underway. Now is the time to sign up friends, neighbors, family members, and work associates. Our goal for this year is 100 new members which would include 25 business members. The next time you are talking to someone who does business in the valley, ask them if they are a member of the Historical Society of Palm Desert. Getting at least one new member would be a great New Years resolution and you would be helping support the Society as well. If you need more tri-fold brochures which contain a membership form, they are available at the historic firehouse during museum hours. Membership Committee co-chairmen are Dick Folkers and John Marman.

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A wish is a desire without any attempt to attain it.

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EXHIBITS

Did you see the winter village scene displayed at the Society? If not, that could be a sign that you don't visit the museum often enough. We have a fabulous "Firefighters: Tools of the Trade" exhibit, be sure to see it. Our next project will be a Founder's Display in the west wing. Your suggestions are welcome.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Ed Mullins Picnic.....Mar. 28
Spring Luncheon.....Apr. 21
Founder's Day.....May ?

CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

A field trip to the University of California Deep Canyon Reserve is planned for Wednesday, February 11. It involves a 2-mile walk & takes 3-1/2 hours. If you want to go, call the office 346-6588 now.

Happy New Year !! Ginny Folkers, editor

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